



RUNCORN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

Medical Officer
of Health

for the

Year ending December 31st, 1943,

Public Health Department,

Town Hall,

Runcorn.

**To the Chairman and Members of the
Urban District Council, Runcorn.**

Gentlemen,

It is regretted that again the Annual Report has to be curtailed at the request of the Ministry of Health, but the latter have asked for certain additional information in this report as it applies to Water Supplies, Immunisation against Diphtheria and Sewage.

Speaking generally, the health of the Community has been satisfactory, especially considering war conditions, the latter have not decreased the efforts of all concerned in Civil Defence duties and the essential work required in connection with Infectious Disease, Food, Milk, Water, Housing and Health Propaganda.

It is noted with the greatest satisfaction that the Government propose to deal by further Acts of Parliament with the many aspects of Public Health, these will apply, for example, to Housing, Town and Country Planning, Milk Supplies, Water Supplies, Sewage Disposal, Education and further facilities for medical treatment and social security.

The various excellent Voluntary Societies will, as before, be most useful agencies whereby members of the community will be aware of the contents of these various Acts of Parliament.

We must congratulate the National Council for Social Services with their many attached Societies, etc., for their excellent voluntary work, especially the Cheshire Community

Council; in addition the Council for Encouragement of Music and Art (C.E.M.A.), has, and in the future will have, an important bearing in bringing Music and Art to the people.

A sound mind in a sound body should be our endeavour.

Vital Statistics.

Birth Rate—17.66 against 17.9 for 1942.

Death Rate—13.22 against 22.2 for 1942.

Infantile Mortality Rate—53.24 against 56.2 for 1942.

Still Births—37.8 against 44.0 for 1942.

The highest mortality figures given are due to the following causes:—Heart Disease and Cancer.

There have been no outstanding causes of sickness or invalidity during the year.

The number of Scarlet Fever cases reported during the year total 94: Diphtheria cases 77, of which 20, after final diagnosis in Hospital reduced this figure to 57; 35 per cent of these cases were severe mixed infections, i.e., Diphtheria with Streptococcal tonsillitis, the latter infection would occur in dense and overcrowded districts.

The percentage of children immunised against Diphtheria from 1938 to year ended 1943 was as follows:—

1 to 5 years—94%. 5 to 15 years—71.05%. The percentage of “booster” doses given will be included in the 1944 Annual Report.

As the total child population cannot be quoted in my Annual Report it is not possible to give a table showing in detail the number of cases immunised and the number of cases of Diphtheria which occurred amongst these, these figures will

be included in the first Post-war Annual Report, but there is no doubt that Immunisation has been a wonderful safeguard in keeping these figures so low considering war conditions and the total child population; however there must be no complacency in this matter now or in the future.

Immunisation Against Diphtheria.

Strenuous efforts have been made through the medium of the Press-Cinema Screens, Circular Letters, Birthday Cards, etc., to Parents and Guardians stressing their great responsibilities in connection with the Immunisation against Diphtheria, and to point out to them that the ONLY REAL SAFE-GUARD against the deadly disease "DIPHTHERIA" is to "ACT AT ONCE" and have their children properly immunised under the Council's free scheme, either by visiting their own Doctor, or by attending special sessions which are held at Balfour Road First-Aid Post, Runcorn, each Thursday between the hours of 4 p.m. to 5 p.m., when a fully-qualified Doctor and Staff are in attendance.

Immunisation clinics at Schools will be organised as and when required. All children (one to fifteen years of age, and as soon after one year as possible) should be immunised against Diphtheria by two doses of the special serum; in addition a "Booster Dose" (one dose of serum) is required in five year's time so as to decrease the possibility of contracting this deadly disease.

Housing.

Owing to war conditions housing conditions are, and will continue to cause some concern. My Council hope as soon as possible with Government aid and private enterprise to arrange for building to relieve overcrowding, those living in unfit houses and other houses required for any increase in the population or other purposes. A short and long term policy will be required, both fitting into a proper Town Planning Scheme which should include the eventual eradication of dense housing districts.

Water Supply.

The sufficiency and quality of the water supply to the Town has been satisfactory; frequent tests are taken during the year by the Deputy County Analyst. The supply is constant and all dwelling houses have a main supply available to them.

Disposal of Sewage.

My Council have appointed a Sub-Committee to deal further with this matter aided by the local Council's Surveyor and other experts. The Ministry of Health are aware of any action which it is proposed to take.

Food and Drug Adulteration Act.

The Samples taken under the Food and Drugs Adulteration Act showed 4 to be adulterated, giving the following percentage 7.2%.

Canal Boats.

The Annual Report of the Canal Boat Inspector was good, and has already been forwarded to the Ministry.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area and Meat Inspections.

These have been carried out most efficiently.

Scabies.

The Scheme which was put into operation during the year 1942 in accordance with the Ministry of Health Scabies Order, is still in operation; persons are treated at the Balfour Road First-Aid Post Cleansing Centre, Runcorn—the treatment consisting of bathing and the application of Benzyl Benzoate. During the year the incidence of Scabies has not been of a severe character.

Health Propaganda.

. Immunisation, Skin Diseases, Dietetics and Cooking, also Venereal Disease have all received special attention; leaflets, etc., have been circulated to all Voluntary Societies, Youth Organisation, etc. The Central Council for Health Education have been of great assistance in this connection.

Householders are again advised that when possible the "Black-out" arrangements on their windows should be removed so as to allow of sufficient light and especially ventilation; in addition frequent "Spring Cleaning" of rooms will help in reducing the incidence of disease.

Infestation.

Infestations of children with head lice, which can not only convey infections, but through irritation and sometimes septic conditions lower the standard of health of the children affected, is being dealt with as efficiently as possible. The use of Lethane Oil (with hot lysol solution and Derbac comb) is strongly recommended as this has been found to be efficacious in the eradication of head lice. Derbac Soap with the Derbac comb has also been used.

Infectious Disease:—Treatment of

Dutton Isolation Hospital, Dutton, near Warrington, acts as a combined Hospital for the Runcorn Urban and Rural Districts as a war measure.

The co-operation and help of all concerned has been greatly appreciated by me in the carrying out of my various duties.

I beg to remain,

Your Obedient Servant,

E. N. HILLMAN GRAY,

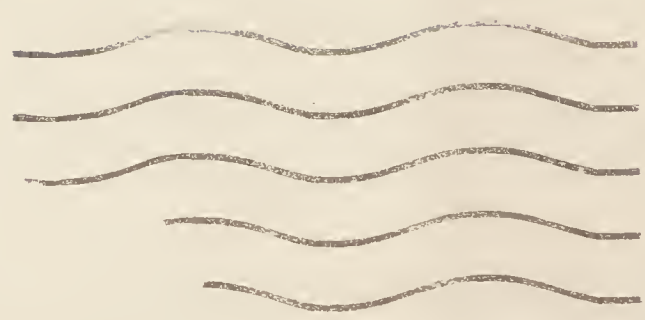
Medical Officer of Health.



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